solution-heating said austenitic stainless steel strip;

cold-rolling said austenitic stainless steel strip to generate a deformation-induced martensite phase; and

re-heating said cold-rolled austenitic stainless steel strip at 500-700°C to induce a phase reversion, by which an austenitic phase is generated at a ratio of 3 vol.% or more in a matrix composed of said deformation-induced martensite phase.

cont'd A34

8. The method of claim 7, including the step of applying a load of 785Pa or more to the stainless steel strip during the re-heating step.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please replace the section heading beginning at page 18, line 1 with the following rewritten section heading:

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 18, line 2 with the following rewritten paragraph:

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A high-strength austenitic stainless steel strip exhibiting excellent flatness with Vickers hardness of 400 or more has the composition comprising: C up to 0.20 mass %, Si up to 4.0 mass %, Mn up to 5.0 mass %, 4.0-12.0 mass % Ni, 12.0-20.0 mass % Cr, Mo up to 5.0 mass %, N up to 0.15 mass % and the balance being Fe except inevitable impurities having a value Md(N) in a range of 0-125 defined by the formula Md(N)=580-520C-2Si-16Mn-16Cr-23Ni-26Cu-300N-10Mo. The material has a dual-phase structure of austenite and martensite involving a reverse-transformed austenite at a ratio of 3 vol.% or more. The material is manufactured by solution-heating a steel strip having the above composition, cold-rolling the steel strip to generate a deformation-induced martensite, and then re-heating at 500-700°C to induce a phase reversion from martensite to at least 3 vol.% austenite. The reversion effectively flattens the steel strip.